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who should be guided in their management, not by their desire of profit, but solely with the view of rendering the river as useful and accessible as possible to the public. The navigation is at present subject to various jurisdictions; and those to whose care it has been intrusted, have, in most cases, neglected their duties, and squandered their funds. The Corporation of Limerick have charge of the Shannon below that city. The tolls levied by them in 1850 amounted to £1150, of which the paltry sum of £75 was expended on the river. The portion from Limerick to Killaloe was vested by Parliament in the hands of the Limerick Navigation Company in 1829. They receive £500 a year for their superintendence, and the remainder of the tolls is expended on the navigation. About £18,000 have been laid out by them on this part of the river, and in building Ball's bridge at Limerick. In 1806, the Grand Canal Company took charge of the navigation from Portumna to Athlone; and received above £54,000 for the purpose of completing the works, and on condition that they should be maintained in efficient repair. It is needless to say that these conditions have not been complied with; and though it appears that the Company have expended on the river £30,000 above the sum advanced by Government, the works are very incomplete, and have never been brought into available and useful order. Lough Derg, and the river from Athlone to its source, are under the Government, who have neglected their charge equally with the rest of the trustees. All these separate jurisdictions should be consolidated under a Board, consisting of a few able and experienced individuals.

The House of Commons Committee have recommended that the commodities conveyed on the Shannon should be necessary to maintain the works in repair. The funds required for the general execution of these works, and the general completion of the navigation, they suggest should be raised, partly by a rate levied on the counties bordering on the Shannon, and partly by a grant from the Treasury. All who are acquainted with the subject agree, that the improvement of this river should not be considered as of merely local interest, but that it should be treated as a question of national importance, attended as it must be by universal advantage to the whole country. In Colonel Burgoyne's opinion, "an outlay of money on the Shannon offers prospects of greater advantages to the country than almost any other public work." All this may be effected at a moderate expense. We have not seen any estimate for the entire Shannon, on which reliance can be placed; but all believe that the amount required is far below what the great importance and advantages of the work would demand.

Steam navigation was introduced on the Shannon above Limerick, in 1827, by Mr. Charles Wye Williams, to whom Ireland is much indebted for his untiring industry and zeal in the promotion of her commercial intercourse. Before that period there was no trade between Dublin and Limerick. The voyage between these places, by Canal and the Shannon, occupied a month, which is now effected in four days from Liverpool. The long sea-voyage by sailing vessels ranges from eight days to two or three months. The freight by Canal and Shannon from Limerick to Liverpool is about fourteen shillings per ton—by sailing vessels ten shillings, sometimes much higher; and to this is to be added a dear rate of insurance. Steamers now go up to Lanesboro', towing barges, which convey timber, slates, iron, and manufactures, and bring corn down for exportation. The trade in corn has very much increased, and forms a fair illustration of the great extension which we may reasonably expect from the perfect opening of the navigation. We subjoin an account of the flour and oatmeal carried by Shannon and Grand Canal for export to Liverpool:

Year ending August 31st, 1853,	9,251 sacks.
..... 1854,	25,072
..... 1855,	43,374
Six months to Feb. 29th, 1856,	44,586

Tolls paid Grand Canal Company:

Year ending August 31st, 1855,	£2,587 12 9
Six months to Feb. 29th, 1856,	5,501 12 6

Such are the present circumstances, and such the future capabilities, of this noble river. Let us hope that it will not longer be suffered to remain a disgrace to the country, a bar to intercourse and improvement; but that it may soon become a fertile agent in diffusing comfort and prosperity, with peace and intelligence, the invariable companions of commerce; that the Shannon shall be no longer on the map a natural sign, marking out the districts where misery and disaffection prevail, but rather that it may appear one of the great paths of civilization and of wealth, a most useful and effective means for the promotion of industry, of enterprise and manufactures.

C. E. S.

ALLEY SHERIDAN, OR THE RUNAWAY MARRIAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRAITS AND STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY."
(Continued from page 392.)

Michael Gartland was the son of a worthy farmer in the neighbourhood, and, notwithstanding the unfavourable circumstances in which he made his *début*, was really a worthy, spirited young fellow himself. His conduct, however, on that occasion was only the natural result of jealousy, inflamed by the severity with which Mullin addressed his sister. In point of wealth he had a fair claim upon the good-will of Alley Sheridan; for his property was fully equal to her own. About six months before the Sunday in question, he had formally proposed for her, and was as formally received with great complacency by her mother. Alley, however, with more decision of character than could have been expected from her father's daughter, stoutly insisted upon the right of a *veto* in a matter that so deeply involved her own happiness, and, therefore, without ceremony rejected him. In this uncertain state was Gartland placed, strongly allured by every possible attention and encouragement from the mother, but repulsed on the daughter's part by the most unequivocal expressions of dislike. Many young men, upon slighter grounds, would have given up the pursuit altogether—and, indeed, his own friends, especially his sisters, dissuaded him from persisting in it; but he loved the girl to excess, and received such countenance from her friends, the old aunt excepted, that he was induced to try what patience and perseverance, backed by the interest of Widow Sheridan herself, might in the course of time effect in his behalf.

Mullin, on the other hand, in personal appearance had greatly the advantage of Gartland; while, in point of property, Gartland was by far his superior. The former, however, was by no means without independence; on the contrary, few in the parish, except Gartland himself, lived in warmer or more comfortable circumstances; but unhappily, in the adjustment of matrimonial alliances in Ireland, it is no unusual thing for a suitor to be rejected when his rival can prove himself to be five pounds the wealthier man; and in proportion as the parties are poor, the much smaller advantage of a pig, goat, or a chaff bed, would cause a preponderance in favour of him who possessed it. Mullin, on finding that he had an advocate in Alley's own breast, lost no time in addressing her mother; but this honest woman, who had been accumulating wealth all her life, would have considered it a crime against the future happiness of her daughter to give her to a man at least three hundred pounds inferior to Gartland, who was her favourite.

"Why thin, Jim Mullin," said she, "the Lord he knows yer family is the honest, and the hard-workin', and the decent family, root and branch, young and ould, man and woman. Doesn't myself remember yer grandfather, Brian Roe Mullin, the time he bought the farm of Tam-lagh from Square Baty—who sowed it to him a thief's pen'orth—ay, indeed, dog-chape all out, in regard o' the executioners bein' down upon him at the time—out of his own hard arnin', too—more to his credit be it spoken; and every one's good word was loud and warm upon him. Well, well—my, oh, we're all but sinners, any how. Och, och, and sure that's like yesterday to me—the way time passes over the best of us! So, ye see, Jim, avick, it's out of no ill-will at all that I refuse my daughter to yer

father's son. No, it's proud I'd be if we could make it a match; and if ye war able to lay down the other three hundher, throth ye'd have my full consint, and my blessin' along wid it; but till then, Jim darlin', sure and ye'll be keepin' yer distance, ye see, in a frindly way—seein' the thing isn't to my plasin', that reared and has a right to give my colleen to the man that has the heaviest purse, which I'll do wid the blessin' of the Almighty."

This conversation took place about a month before that which we have detailed as occurring between Mullin and Gartland at the chapel; and subsequently our readers may perceive the relative situations in which the two rivals stood with reference to their hopes of succeeding with the daughters. It is not to be supposed that Mullin, during his walk home with Alley, neglected to avail himself of the opportunity which occurred to press his suit with all the ardour and rude eloquence in his power. In fact, he made the most of his time, and contrived to get a promise from her, on the strength of which an arrangement was made, that our readers in due time shall have an opportunity of knowing.

We will now leave the contending parties preparing their cudgels for the ensuing fair, and proceed to the development of a plot, such as the vigilance of parents and jealous lovers have frequently discovered, and as frequently will to the end of the chapter. The evening but one preceding the fair day had set in, when a labourer of Widow Sheridan's, called "Paul the Shot," *alias* Paul Kelly, came to the "Mishthress's,"—so the widow was called—having a very fine pointer dog slung from a gun over his shoulder, and a black lamb under his arm; both were bleeding, but lifeless, having been recently shot. This man was called Paul the Shot, like *parca quia minime parcat*, because, though irreclaimably addicted to the sports of the gun, he seldom ever *hit* what he shot at, and seldom *missed* any living object which happened to be near him, provided he did not aim at it.

"The butt o' the evenin' to you, Misthress Sheridan! Sure you know I wouldn't be afther passin' yer door wid-out givin' you a call, wishin' health and happiness, long life and visitation, to you and yours, excludin', of coorse, Misther Owen and Miss Alley here. By the shot o' my pouch, but it would be ill my common to pass them by, any how. Now, Miss Alley, for the noggin o' thick milk, a colleen dhas; and a *gra gal machree* you wor, my darlin'—the flower o' the flock in throth, and maybe that's no lie. Augh, augh! there's the hand, large and bountiful: hundhers o' thanks to you, darlin', and luck in lashins to where that came from! Here's God bless the cows, any way! Miss Alley, yer health—wishin' it was better for yer sake—and a good husband to you, and soon. *Thigun thu?*—eh?—ah!—ha, ha, ha!"

"Why thin, Paul, what the dickens is this you've brought us?—eh, Paul?" inquired Mrs. Sheridan.

"Hah! well, well!" replied Paul, wiping his mouth with the sleeve of his coat, "that's the stuff in earnest for milk! it's mate and dhrink, so it is. Why, you see," he continued, giving his mouth another wipe with his gathered palm, "the visitation of it was this: I borried *him*," pointing to the dog, "from Jemmy Duffy, Lord M——'s gamekeeper, to have some sport, as this was an idle day wid me. We went up the mountains till we came to Cullamore, when, sure enough, a murdherin' fine lump of a hare started out, as big as I dunna what—hard fortune to her this day, wherever she is, I pray Gimini! but she was the unfortunate hare to me. Ethen, ma'am, would she be ould Gibson! for they say she's not right. Bad luck to her, any way! if ever I come across her agin, she's as dead as mutton!—made off, the thief o' the world, so she did, and he afther her like Erin-go-bragh. Here's a dose o' pepper, says I, lettin' fly—pop!—whoo!—crack at you!—and be my song, sure enough, up she turns, head over heels, and dhrops! More power to you, Paul! says I, you never shot, a bouchal-beg, but you hot somethin'—*ershi misha*—and I gave a caper five yards high!—oh, the sorra an inch less!—didn't I see the parish of *Faug-a-ballagh* on the other side o' the hill down? It's powdhered you are, says I, and peppered, misthress puss—runnin' up, at the same time to *bone** her—and, be

all the books that ever was open or shut, when I got to her, it wasn't the hare at all at all, but Jimmy Duffy's five-an'-twenty guineas' worth of a pointer that I put daylight through! Bud-an'-age! how 'ill I face him at all at all?" said Paul, scratching his head, and looking ruefully at the dead dog.

"Paul," said young Sheridan—"ha, hem, (puff)"—

"Well, Misther Owen?"

"How did you—(puff) ha, um, (puff) hem"—

"Anan!"

"How did—um, ha, hem, (puff)"—

"You may puff away, Misther Owen; but, any how, it was a puff too many wid me this bout. I only wish this thievin' gun had hung fire—been as slow to go off wid herself as some people we know," replied Paul, with a wink at Alley, while he screwed his mouth at Owen, who did not notice him.

"I suppose," said Alley, "that Owen wishes to know how you shot the black lamb, Paul."

"Humph!" said Owen, as he nodded in assent, and swirled the smoke away from his mouth.

"Throth, it was all Bridget's fault here," replied Paul, pointing to the gun; "the sorra purtier hand at takin' down beef or mutton in Europe than she is, a *vechonee bradha*! for sure there's not a day I go out, that some neighbour or other isn't a sheep or calf the worse of her, and all in quensequence of her mischeevous ways. Sow! many a thump she gives myself, when she's not in good humour!"

"But how did you shoot the lamb, Paul?" inquired Mrs. Sheridan.

"Why, you see, ma'am, I was comin' along the head ridge of the *hankerchy*,* and the *breard* bein' hardly coverin' the clod, what does I see makin' a fog male of my bit of oats but a flock of blackguard parsons.† What a visitation we have! but I'll have a slap at yees, for I don't love your breed, says I—and sure no more we don't, whether or not—the curse o' the crows upon ye, says I, asy—for they're as cunnin' as their namesakes, and as greedy any day—the curse o' the crows upon yees, says I, ye black sconces! is it takin' tithes so soon yees are? Wid that I levels Bridget—puff, slap—there's a taste o' the brimstone, and you'll get another *below*, says myself; and be the law Harry they tuck to their scrapers, except a big bosthoon o' them, that I seen whamblin' himself in the fur; so up I goes, and finds my own brave black lamb, that I intinded the wool of to make a black coat for Phiddhre,‡ in regard of him bein' for the mission. Ho, ho! says I, by the contints o' Moll Kelly's primer!—faix, I suppose *she* was a descindant o' *my own*—if we don't have wild fowl—for sorra tail o' them I tuck a feather out of—if we don't have wild fowl, we'll have wenison at all evints; so the worse luck now, the better agin. Sure and it was only a mistake wid them both," pointing to the dog and lamb, "any how—and the mate, too, at first cost for us."

"Have you nothin' new, Paul?" inquired Mrs. Sheridan.

"The sorra taste, barrin' it be a pair o' new breeches I bought for Phiddhre on Sathurda—ha, ha, ha! Sure if we haven't a joke in us, Ma'am, what's the world good for?"

During the conversation, Paul was giving private signals to Mrs. Sheridan, with an air of the most profound mystery; none of which, however, she perceived. At length he looked up the chimney from a point of observation immediately beside where she sat.

"Thunder-an'-turf, what bacon!" he exclaimed, at the same time contriving to give her a pluck unperceived: "why it's a full foot deep, so it is, if it's an inch. Faix, it's no wondher for you, Mr. Owen, to be stout an' gin-teel, fat and dacent, and bodach-like, that's fed upon the same bacon, God bless it."

Mrs. Sheridan fixed her eye inquiringly upon him, and he immediately looked towards the door, as a hint to her to follow him out.

* Handkerchief—three-cornered field,

† Rooks,

‡ Peter,

"Bedad, it's the purtiest hangin' o' bacon I seen this many a day, God spare yees yer health to make use of it! Good evenin', Miss Alley; the flower o' the flock you are, mavourneen. Mr. Owen, wishin' you the same—and it's yourself that's the sprightly hero all out, and full o' life and spirits, and smart as a haystack at a weddin'—ha, ha, ha! *Banacht thut*,† any way, you deludher you!"

"Ha, um—(puff,)" replied Owen.

"Why, thin, by the beauty o' man, Mrs. Sheridan!" exclaimed Paul, when they had got some distance from the house, "if I had any notion at all that you wor so dull of extension; and sure myself was makin' faces at you the best part o' the time, and you never looked round to see what I meant."

"Why, Paul avick, have you any news?"

"Augh! news, is it? Arrah to be sure I have. Your daughter manes to go off wid Mullin to-morrow night, and he's to bring a lot o' the 'boys' wid him, for fear of accidents or opposition. Now your plan is to get in as many o' the neighbours to watch the house as possible. Keep them sittin' up all night. I'll come myself, an' bring Bridget here wid me. Get a lot o' whiskey from Jimmy Graham there beyant, to keep up our courage—I mane, our spirits—and never fear but we'll pass a pleasant night entirely, so we will; and your *colleen dhas* will be safe an' sound for you in the mornin', God willin'. What I'm tellin' you is gospel; so mind yourself. I'll be here, for one, to-morrow night; but don't forget the poteen."

"Ay, indeed, Paul; it's the best way. Sure I couldn't expect the neighbours to keep from their warm beds, out o' regard o' me or my child, widout showin' them some dacency."

She then returned to the house, without appearing to be in the slightest degree in Alley's secret—although both daughter and aunt had very strong suspicions that the conference between her and Paul bore in some manner upon the girl's design with Mullin, or her marriage to Gartland, the latter of which she had been pressing on Alley for the last few days with unusual eagerness. In fact, the aunt and niece were engaged, during the above conversation, precisely upon the same topics—for the sagacity of love is proverbial.

"Aunt," said Alley, as they retired to another room, "I'd wager a thrife this higger-muggherin' between Paul and my mother is all about James Mullin and myself."

"And what suppose, aroon? Let them *coggher*‡ till they're deaf. I'll warrant we'll outdo them! The sorra ring ever Mickle Gartland will put an you, if I can prevint it. The doatin' ould fool!—Lord pardon me for sayin' so—doesn't the world know, and say too—an' she ought to know it—that Jem Mullin's your match of a husband any day in the year, and of as dacent a strain as any belongin' to you."

"I believe my mother, bein' marrid to my father in mistake," replied Alley, "never was in love at all, aunt. She thinks he's the best husband that has the most *airighid*,§ widout makin' no inclusion whatsoever to any thing else."

"Her in love! I'll tell you, avourneen—she's my shister, and sucked the same breast wid me, but I could take the sacrament on it—you're her daughter, Alley, and I wouldn't say this to another—I could take the sacrament that she never knew act or part of love—may the heavens above forgive her this day!—oftened we all to pray for it? I own to her bein' as good a wife as ever broke bread, and as doatin'ly fond of her man; but as for love—the Lord forgive and forget it to her, and grant that it mayn't be comin' agin her hereafter, a *wurrah dheelish*. *Amin!*"

"Oughtn't every girl to love her husband before she'd marry him, aunt?"

"Her husband! Och, och! you innocent crathur, that makes no differ in the world. Och, och, oh!—isthrue, isthrue!" sobbed the aunt, wiping her eyes with her apron:

"the heavens be his bed this day!—gallons itself I've shed over his grave, if they were counted. But he was the beautiful boy to look at, wid his fine scarlet head upon him, that you'd know among a ship-load o' people—so red and so illigant: but that same was nothin' to 'his choice bullies o' feet! He was jist two-an'-twenty whin he tuck ill o' the mazes; and as we had given one another a *hand-promise*, I was cock sure of him: but isthrue! it wasn't laid out for us, or he would be spared. I promised to make a station to Lough Derg, if he'd mend: and so he did get out o' them at first; but it was the dhregs o' the mazes that carried him off; and I had to go, whin he was dead, and take him by the right hand afore witness, to give back my promise.* But, Alley," she continued in a whisper—

"Well, aunt, dheelish!"

"If I'm a jivin' woman, whin I *catch* him by the hand, and he *stretcht*, he gev me a squeeze."

"Dsk, dsk, dsk!"‡ exclaimed Alley, with a shudder of alarm, "the life 'ud start out o' myself, if he did it to me. But, aunt, what if my mother has found out about my runaway wid James Mullin to-morrow night?"

The aunt, however, had her apron up to her eyes, rocking her head in the abstracted remembrance of the beautiful boy who departed in the measles, to her undying grief. It was some time, therefore, before she seemed to notice Alley's question; but on perceiving it, she hastily squeezed her shrivelled nose with her apron, in the bitterness of sorrow, and replied—

"Ay, ay, Alley; no matther in life a *hudh*—well be man enough for all o' thim: lave it to me, Alley—here she's comin'—lave it to me, you see: I'll have my eye about me, and will go up to Vara Kelly this evenin': for that aumadhaun, Paul, will tell her all, and I'll get it out of her, wid the help of a stone o' male and a miscaun o' butther."

With this plan in view, Alley resumed her seat at the kitchen fire, and continued her knitting, while the aunt knelt down in the corner, and pulling out her beads, began to finger them with great apparent devotion, her piercing eyes half shut, and her body, as usual, swaying to and fro, whilst she glanced, from time to time, a keen side-look at the countenance of the widow, with the hope of perusing upon it any expression that might throw light upon the mystery which she desired to penetrate.

The next morning widow Sheridan followed her son to the garden, through which he sauntered, pipe in mouth, with one hand thrust into his small-clothes pocket almost to the knee, and the other to the elbow in his bosom.

"Owen!"

Owen pulled out his pipe, and looked at her, letting the smoke slowly out of his mouth, into which he put the pipe once more with great deliberation, and puffed away

"Owen, I say!"

"Puff—um—whaat?"

"Come here, avick, and I'll give you a five shillin' for the fair, and a quarther o' tobaccy, maybe, of Muckatee's pig-tail, abouchal."

"No thin—um—will you?"

"Faix, will I—if you do what I want you; and maybe it's a watch I'll be buyin' for you, some o' these days!"

"Ay, but sure I've no pocket for it in my good breeches."

"What matther, acushla; you can wear it in your coat pocket, till you get another pair, when the tailure can take the measure o' the watch for it, clane and dacent."

"Bedad, ay!—ha, ha, um—(puff—chuckle, chuckle)—hoo! haa!"

"Now, Owen, stay in the house all day, and watch Alley, till I come back; we're to have a match-makin' to-night, and you'll get whiskey, wid sugar and hot wather in it, and lots o' things."

"No, thin!"

"Togs, ay; don't let her lave the house till I come home, and, along wid all, I'll buy you a new Caroline hat in the fair."

* When a farmer has his chimney well lined with hog's flesh, they say he has a "good hangin' o' bacon."

† My blessing to you.

‡ Talk secretly.

§ Money.

* This is quite common among the peasantry.

† A sound among the peasantry expressive of wonder: it is produced by striking the tip of the tongue against the palate.

Owen instinctively took off his *caubeen*, and viewed it with great contempt.

"I want that, any how—um, hem—(puff)—if it was Sunday mornin', I might shave myself in this, wid the way it shines—um, hem!"

"Well, I'll get you one. Now go in, and don't let an that I bid you, at all at all; but have an eye to her, or if you don't, you'll lose the weddin', and the brave suit o' clothes you'll get for it."

Owen nodded assent, and, with strides of a minute each, entered the house, to undertake his duty for the day. Nothing, indeed, could be more ludicrous than the literal fidelity with which he performed it. His sister could not move even from one side of the kitchen to the other, that he did not dodge after her—up or down—backwards or forwards—from room to room—he watched her with an oafish vigilance, which nothing could repress. Several times he resolutely opposed her egress from the house, and with such a peculiarly awkward air of mystery, as induced her to believe that his natural sluggishness of temper was settling into downright idiotism. The girl was annoyed; but as she had nothing of importance that required her presence abroad, his conduct created on her part more mirth than anger. Not so the aunt: after remonstrating with him by fair words and abuse, and endeavouring, without success, to wind out of him the cause of his vigilance, she indignantly seized a sweeping-brush, which, with all her bodily energy, she applied to his back and shoulders in the most unsparing manner, accompanying the action with suitable figures of rhetoric.

"Let me at him! Alley, I say, don't hould me," said she, addressing her niece, who was in convulsions of laughter. "Is it a lump of a spy we've got?—(a swinging blow)—a lump of a baste of a spy—(the blow repeated twice)—a lump of a baste of a bosthoun of a spy!—(thrice)—Eh! you pot-walloper you!—(another)—isn't it a fine employment he's got, to be watchin' the weemen, as if he was one of us! Why don't you put a petticoat an you at once? (Ditto, ditto.) Bad cess to me, but I'll *budher* the sowl out o' your carcase, you ringle-eyed thief o' the world—you gandher faced bagabone! Och, och, wurrh! isn't it the pity that the breath's goin' out o' me, till I'd baste the bones of him! Oh, oh! only I'm as wake as wather, I'd pay you widout puttin' much in your pocket, you cot you! Off wid you, and mind the hens, you thief you!"

"Behave yourself," said Owen, whose head was protected by his arms: "let me alone, you *kalliagh*!—let me alone, you!—behave, I say!—if you don't, be wind and weather, I'll smash the windows, so I will!—Now!"

The resolute old dame, however, once more took breath, and changing her point of attack, came across his shins with an activity and a degree of science really surprising. Owen, for a wonder, was compelled to be nimble; and had not Alley herself interfered, the old woman would have given him cause to regret becoming dragon on this occasion. With a fidelity, however, peculiar to sluggish people, he continued to maintain his post, and actually refused to permit his sister to leave the house until the return of his mother.

This event was still involved in considerable mystery; nor was the widow's appearance in the evening calculated to lessen the anxiety felt by her sister and niece on the cause of her absence. The good woman was silent, reserved, and gloomy; neither did she appear to be free from apprehension and alarm. But though endeavouring, as well as possible, to conceal her anxiety, she could not prevent her displeasure from manifesting itself in sullen glances at Alley and her aunt. These were returned by the latter with interest, garnished, too, by several dark hints and broken innuendos, not at all palatable.

No sooner had night set in, than the neighbours began, to the evident surprise of Alley, to assemble in the widow's kitchen, each armed with a gun, pistol, pitchfork, flail, or cudgel.

"Alley," said the aunt, from the inner room, "*guthso, a colleen*—come here, girl. Sure," she continued, "I didn't wish to be puttin' the grief upon you before the time; and when I told you that Vara Kelly knowed nothing about it, it was a big lie—the Lord pardon me—

husht now, or aal's over with us;—don't let them see you cryin' at all. I'll bate them myself, stock, lock, and barrel, if you'll be said or led by me. Look at this windy—when I give you this sign, (crossing herself,) be off through it; I loosened it myself when you and that aumadhawn wor palaverin' through the kitchen. Put this jug o' wather undher the bed, and when the whiskey comes I'll play-act all myself. Sorra ring ever the same Gartland 'ill put an you! I'd purvint that, if was only out o' clane contrariness. Now husht, alana, and lave every thing to myself."

Early in the night, two large jars of "rale potheen" were brought from Graham's; and about nine o'clock a party, amounting to above thirty stout men, were ranged about the hearth, and in such other parts of the kitchen as were best adapted for their accommodation. Alley, by the command of her mother, remained also in the kitchen, silent and dejected, notwithstanding her aunt's injunctions to overreach them by affecting mirth and good-humour. The aunt, however, did not appear at all among them; for, in fact, the nature of her plan rendered her presence for some time longer unseasonable.

In the mean time, songs, stories, and whiskey circulated with great rapidity. The widow, in the kindness of her heart, suffered not a man to evade his glass; nor, indeed, was there a single person present disposed to do so. At length ten o'clock arrived, and the old aunt made her appearance in the kitchen; but no sooner had she surveyed the fire-arms that lay piled upon the dresser, than, giving a shriek which startled the whole company, she sank down in a fit. In a moment she was surrounded, carried out to the street for air, had the palms of her hands lustily clapped, and her face plentifully bedewed with cold water. These remedies had the desired effect, and she gradually recovered.

"Oh, wurrh dheelish!—och, oh, oh, oh, oh! livin' mother!—but no matther—I'm an ould, unsignified crathur, not worth savin'. Oh my, oh! has none o' yees any feelin' to take them murderin' guns, and pistols, and bagnets, and blunderbushes out o' my sight? Out o' my sight wid them, except you wish the life to lave me!—away up into that room wid them, and put them on the bed, that the stone walls 'ill be betuxt us. Oh, livin' mother, such a fright as I got! I'll not be the same thing to the day o' my death. Och, oh! I'm goin' agin—a dhrink o' wather, or I'm off! Wet my lips, some of yees, except yees wish to have me stiff on your hands in no time all out!"

"For goodness' sake, Mat Kearney," said the widow, "take and put them all upon the bed in that room up there, or this foolish ould crathur will dhrup."

"Ould is it? Well, that bangs Banagher! Is it any wonder that people forget themselves?—and me never saw the light more nor twelve years, when she was a stag of a hussey cardin' *backins** for the Slevins. But no matther in life; it's the house I'll lave, if I'm spared for one night more any how—och, och, isthru, isthru!—neighbours, if you knew but all—well, sure I'll say nothin'; it's takin' lave of her sines the woman is, or she wouldn't turn her own house into a barrack, as she's doin'. Och, och, don't I deserve what I'm suffering for not takin' the offer of a decent house o' my own, instead o' standin' on another body's flure as I am."

The guns and pistols were by this time placed upon the bed, and by a display of histrionic skill that would not disgrace the first actress of the day, either on or off the stage, she completely succeeded in lulling any suspicion of the insincerity of what she felt. By and by she got up, saying,

"Hand me that jug o' wather agin, Mick Duggan, if you please, till I wet my lips wid it, before I go out to the barn, and thrive to be makin' my sowl, any way; for I find it's not long for this world I am. Alley asthore, hand me them bades that's hangin' on the dockin'† in the corner beyant."

* The coarse tow taken from flax—a cut at her former poverty.

† The country people use a burdock for hanging clothes, yarn, and other light articles, upon its branches.

On getting the beads she sallied out, but instead of seeking the barn, she went very quietly to a back window of the dwelling-house, which opened into the room that now contained the fire-arms; in a few minutes, with an alacrity which could not have been expected from her, she squeezed herself through, and taking the jug of water before mentioned, wet the pan and touch-hole of every gun and pistol on the bed, after which she quietly returned through the window, leaving the arms perfectly useless. In the mean time, Paul the Shot, who had been detained long beyond his intended hour, arrived, and by his presence not only enlivened them with his drollery, but occasioned the whiskey to be circulated more freely, if possible, than before.

The night had now advanced to eleven o'clock, when the aunt entered, with a sadly devout face, beads in hand.

"Here, Alley jewel, hang them on the dockin' agin. Och, och—it's sinners and fools we all are," she ejaculated, "to be thinkin' of any thing but our sows! Asthore, Alley, go up into that room," said she to her niece, crossing herself as the signal, "and thry if you can find my little bottle of holy wather that's some place in it; but, for the love of heaven, keep from them murderin' guns and pisthols; don't come wíthout it, for I'll not be myself till I get a sup of it an me."

"Katty," said Paul, winking at the company, "bud-an'-age, sure such a good crathur as you doesn't want the half of the prayers you say; but, any way, you're what I call a tight ould blade, and commit very little sin whin you're asleep."

"I kill no mutton thin, any how, Paul," said she.

"Arrah, Paul," said one of them, "will you tell us the story about the time you went to buy the forty-piana for Colonel Edmonson's daughter, long ago?"

[Here follows the episode of the "Piano Thirty," which has been inserted in the 101st number of the Journal, to which we refer our readers.]

(To be concluded in our next.)

ANACREONTIC ODE.

Nature, with providential care,
Midst other bounties, left
No living thing that wanders here
Of self-defence bereft.

Those teeth and jaws of matchless force
She gave the lion bold;
With sinewy strength endowed the horse,
And hooves of solid mould.

His goring horns the bull she gave;
The swift foot to the hare;
The fish, a shelter in the wave;
The winged bird, in the air.

Man, bless'd with wisdom, was ordained
To lord creation o'er;
And woman—what for her remain'd
Of bounteous Nature's store?

Why, beauty—'gainst whose conquering charms,
Resistless as the dart,
No shield defends, no courage arms,
The captivated heart.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, CLONMEL.